

THE REHEARSAL.

PART II. 76

1. Whether those words, I will set a King over me, *Dent. xvii. 14.* do imply the Choice of the King to be in the People?
2. Saul was not Chosen by the People.
3. The Voice of the People was against God. Saul made it his Excuse. Belial Crying for Liberty. Compar'd to Idolatry. To Reign Signifies to Refrain: All Laws are Restraints upon Liberty.
4. The Obligation of Duty to Saul, when he was Chosen.
5. What is Meant by the People being said to Choose their King. shew'd in Solomon. How Particularly he was Chosen. Even before he was Born.

From Saturday December the 1st. to Saturday December the 8th. 1705.

COUNTRY-M. YOU have made it Plain to me, Master, That the People of the Jews did Commit a Great Sin, in Asking a King. And therefore, That the Text Urged for the People to Choose their King, that is, *Dent. xvii. 14.* was spoke of this Sin of the Jews; And therefore, in Consequence, is Rather against the Right of the People to Choose their King, as making it Sinfull.

(1.) But however I wou'd know, whether these words, *When thou shalt say, I will set a King over me,* do's not imply the Choice of the People? For to this Purpose they are Urg'd.

Rehears. When God fore-told this Great Sin of the People, and the Punishment that shou'd follow; He in Judgment Remember'd Mercy. Though He permitted them to Abdicate Himself. Yet He did not not totally Forsake them. He wou'd not suffer them to Fall into that Utmost of Confusion, to have the Choice of their Kings left to Themselves. Therefore He Reserv'd that still to Himself. And therefore, by that Expression, *I will set a King over me,* was not meant, That they shou'd Choose their King. For that is Expressly Barr'd in the next words following, *When thou shalt say, I will set a King over me—Thou shalt in any wise set him King over thee, whom the Lord thy God Chooseth.*

(2.) **COUNTRY-M.** But how did God Choose their King? Did God Name the Person who shou'd be their King?

Rehears. He did. As you may see in the 3 first Kings He gave them. The first was Saul. The People left the Choice to Samuel. *1. Sam. viii. 4, 5.* All the Elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel, unto Ramah, and said unto him—*Make Us a King.* But neither They nor Samuel knew who this King shou'd be. Till God himself did Name him. *Chap. ix. 15, 16, 17.* The Lord told Samuel in his Ear a Day before Saul came, saying, *To morrow about this time I will send thee a Man out of the Land of Benjamin; and thou shalt Anoint him to be Captain over my People Israel—And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, Behold the Man whom I spake to thee of, this same shall Reign over my People.* Accordingly we find *Chap. x.* That Samuel did Anoint him. And confirm'd it to Saul, (who knew nothing of it himself) by several Signs. And at last, by Changing the Heart of Saul, and turning him into another Man, and Causing him to Prophecy, by the Spirit of God coming upon him.

All this while, the People knew nothing of the Matter; nor troubled themselves about the Choice of the King; having left it wholly to Samuel.

COUNTRY-M. If they Impower'd Samuel to Choose for them, it was their Choice still.

Rehears. They did not Impower Samuel, but Petition'd him (he was then their Judge) to Give them a King. Which Samuel wou'd not do, till God Commanded him. *Chap. viii. 6, 7, 22.* The thing Displeas'd Samuel, when they said, give us a King—And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel, *hearken unto the Voice of the People—for they have not reject'd*

Thee, but they have reject'd Me, that I shou'd not Reign over them. According to all the works which they have done, since the Day that I brought them up out of the Land of Egypt, even unto this Day; wherewith they have Provoked me, and served other Gods; so do they also unto thee. Now therefore Harken unto their Voice, and make them a King.

(3.) **COUNTRY-M.** Here I observe, that the Voice of the People was always against God, still Provoking Him. It was the Voice of Belial, rather than of God! Of Belial crying out for Liberty, and to be Free from the Yoke of that Government which God had Plac'd over them!

And that God compares this to their Serving of other Gods. As the same Samuel, in this same Book, *Chap. xv. 23.* Calls Rebellion, Witch-Craft and Idolatry.

And ver. 24. Saul pleads the Voice of the People for his Excuse. *Because I feared the People, and Obeyed their Voice.*

And for the word Reign, our Margin Reads *Refrain.* As *Chap. ix. 17.* This same shall Reign over my People Israel, it is, This same shall Refrain my People. For Reigning is Refraining, and so is all Government and Laws, it is Refraining of Liberty. This Provokes the Rebellious Spirit, who wou'd be Belial, that is, Free from all Yoke or Refrain. Which is being Free from all Government or Laws, but our own Will. And this is the True Bottom and Foundation of all our Popular Declamations for Liberty; and placing the Original of Power in the People. The End of it is, to have no Government at all. Whether themselves see it, or not. For there is an Insatiation, and a Blindness that is Judicial. But it is Hop'd, that is not the Case of All. And that there are some yet Left, who will Harken to Reason; to our Laws; to the History of all Ages; and to the Authority of Holy Scripture; or who will be Convinc'd, at least, by their own Experience!

But I have Interrupted you. You were going on with the Election of Saul.

Rehears. After Saul was Chosen and Nam'd by God, and Anointed by Samuel; then Samuel Assembl'd the Tribes, not to Choose who shou'd be King, for that they did not; but rather to Declare him unto them. He caus'd them to Present themselves before the Lord, by their Tribes, and by their Thousands. *1. Sam. x. 19.* And it is said, that such a Tribe, and such a Family was Taken. But how they were Taken is not said, whether by Lot, as some suppose, or that Samuel told them which God had Taken, or how otherwise God did Determine it. But it is Certain that it was not by Votes of the People. For they knew not Saul when he was Taken or Nam'd. He was an Obscure Man, and none of the Princes of the Tribes. Nor did they know where to find him. Till God told them where Saul had hid himself ver. 22. Then they Ran and fetch'd him. And Samuel said to all the People see Yee him whom the Lord hath Chosen.

COUNTRY-M. It is very Plain that this Election was from God, and not from the People.

(4.) But seeing they Sinned in Asking a King, did they not Sin likewise in Obeying him? Was

not that I going on with their Sin? Ought they not to have *Quit* him, and *Repented*, and *Return* back again to their *Theo-Crasie*, and to *Samuel* who was their *Judge* under that *Oeconomy*?

Rehears. The Choice of the Person being from God, it gave him *Divine Commission*. He was now the *Chosen* of God, the *Anointed* and *Immediate Representative* of God. Which the People could never have made him. Their *Voice* was not the *Voice* of God. God alter'd the *Frame* of their *Government* as they *Desir'd*. But when it was *Alter'd*, they could not *Alter* it again. More than they could *Alter* it at first. If they could have *Alter'd* it *Themselves*, they needed not have been so very *Earnest* with *Samuel* to have *Alter'd* it for them, and *Bore* his several *Repulses* and *Refusal* to do it; till as I said, God gave him *Orders* to do it. And then they were *Determin'd*. They could not go *Back* again. And it is very *Observable*, that in this same Chap. v. 26, 27. They who *Adher'd* to *Saul*, after he was thus *Chosen*, are said to be those, *Whose Hearts* God had *Touched*. But the *Children* of *Belial* said, *How shall this Man Save Us? And they Dispersed him*. True *Sons* of *Liberty*! They *Must*, they *Would* have a *King*; and as I may say, even *Forced* God to give them one. But as soon as they had him, then, *How shall this Man Save Us?* They were never *Contented*! Nor ever can be, upon that *Foot* of *Liberty*, and being under no *Yoke*! This is the *Constancy* of the *Voice* of the People! One Day, *Hosannah!* the next is *Crucify!* This is the *Sense*, the *Justice*, the *Government* of *Beelzebub's FLIES!* instead of God and the *King*, they are for *Belial* and *Beelzebub*, for *Liberty*, and the *Voice* of the People!

Country-m. But how did *Samuel* carry in this *Affair*? Some were for *Saul*, and some against him. And *Samuel* was then *Judge*. He might have *Join'd* with the *Party* that were against *Saul*, and still have *Retain'd* his *Office*, and been the *Chief Governor* himself.

Rehears. He knew that God had now *Alter'd* the *Form* of their *Government*. And that he was no longer *Judge*. Therefore he *Immediately Submitted* to *Saul*, and that before all the People, as a *Precedent* to them. Chap. xii. 1. &c. And *Samuel* said unto all *Israel*, behold I have *Hearkned* unto your *Voice*— And have made a *King* over you. And now behold, the *King* walketh before you— Behold here I am, *Witness* against me before the *Lord*, and before his *Anointed*; whose *Ox* or *Ass* have I *taken*? &c. And when none could *Accuse* him, he said, *The Lord is Witness* against you, and his *Anointed* is *Witness* this day, that ye have not found ought in my *Hand*. You see here, that he *Submitted* himself to be *Judged* by *Saul*, as being then the *LORD's Anointed*, and consequently the *Supreme Judge* over all, even over *Samuel* himself; and also for any *Male-Administrations*, if he had been *Guilty* of any, even before *Saul* was *King*, and while *Samuel* himself was the *Supreme Judge*. And then sure *Saul* was *Judge* of all *Others*. So that his *Government* was *Supreme*, and over all *Causes* and *Persons*.

And to confirm the People in their *Obedience* to *Saul*, tho' they had *Sinned* in *Desiring* a *King*, which *Samuel* laid fully before them; yet he adds, ver. 14. *If you will Fear the Lord, and serve Him—Then shall both ye, and also the King that Reigneth over you continue following the Lord your God*. That is, they were in *GOD's Covenant*, and he would *Bless* them, under this *Kingly Government*.

(5.) *Country-m.* But it is said, ver. 13. *Behold the King whom ye have Chosen*. Do's not this make the People to have *Chosen*? And that the *Choice* of the *King* was in the *People*?

Rehears. Their *Choosing*, there, means no more than their *Desiring* a *King* in the *General*, not their *Choosing* the *Person*, which God did. And it

is thus *Explained* in the same *Verse*. Now therefore, *Behold the King whom ye have Chosen, and whom ye have Desired; and behold, the Lord hath set a King over you*.

It is *Common* in the *Holy Scriptures* as well as other *Writings*, to call that the *Act* or *Choice* of any one, to which they *Consent*; or which they *Desire*, or *Approve* of. It is said *Exod. xxxii. 35*. That the *People* made the *Calf*, which *Aaron* made. Thus it is said, 1. Chr. xxix. 22. That the *People* *Made* *Solomon King* and *Anointed* him unto the *Lord* to be the *Chief Governor*, and *Zadok* to be *Priest*. Now it is *Certain*, that it was not the *Office* of the *People* to *Anoint* the *King*, far less to *Anoint* the *Priest*. Nor did they do it. For it is said *Expressly*, 1. Kin. 1. 39. That *Zadock* the *Priest* took an *Horn* of *Oyl* out of the *Tabernacles* and *Anointed* *Solomon*. Nor did they *Make* *Solomon King*, otherwise than by *Rejoicing* at it, and *Adding* their *Acclamations*. For God had *Chosen* *Solomon* to be *King*, even before he was *Born*. As God said to *David*, 1. Chr. xxii. 9. &c. *Behold a Son shall be Born unto thee, who shall be a Man of Rest—for his Name shall be Solomon—And he shall be my Son, and I will be his Father; And I will Establish the Throne of his Kingdom over Israel for ever*. And Chap. xxiii. 1. So when *David* was old, he made *Solomon* his *Son King* over *Israel*. And Chap. xxviii. 1. 4. &c. *David* *Assembled* all the *Princes* of *Israel* the *Princes* of the *Tribes*, &c. And said, *Hear me, my Brethren, and my People—The Lord God of Israel chose me before all the House of my Father, to be King over Israel forever: For he hath chosen Judah to be the Ruler: And of the House of Judah the House of my Father: And among the Sons of my Father, He liked me to make me King over all Israel: And of all my Sons (for the Lord hath given me many Sons) He hath Chosen Solomon my Son to sit upon the Throne of the Kingdom of the Lord over Israel*. And Chap. xxix. 1. *David* the *King* said unto all the *Congregation*, *Solomon* my *Son*, *Whom* alone God hath *Chosen*, is yet *Young*, &c. Then he shew'd 'em *Solomon* for their *King*. And ver. 20. *David* said to all the *Congregation*, *Now Bless the Lord your God*. And all the *Congregation* blessed the *Lord God* of their *Fathers*, and *Bowed down* their *Heads*, and *Worshipped* the *Lord*, and the *King*. And they *Sacrificed* *Sacrifices* unto the *Lord*— And did *Eat* and *Drink* before the *Lord* on that *Day*, with *Great Gladness*; And they *Made* *Solomon* the *Son* of *David King* the second time, and *Anointed* him unto the *Lord* to be the *Chief Governor*, and *Zadok* to be *Priest*— And all the *Princes*, and the *Mighty Men*, and all the *Sons* likewise of *King David*, *submitted themselves* unto *Solomon* the *King*.

This was all the *Meaning* of their being said to *Make* him *King*, and to *Anoint* him. They *Concurr'd* *Heartily* in it, and *Approv'd* of it. As the *People* are here said to *Sacrifice*. Whereas none could *Sacrifice* but the *Priests*. And it was *Death* for any but the *Priests* to *Approach* unto the *Altar*. Num. iii. 10, 38. xvi. 40. xviii. 7. And God struck the *Great King Uzziah* with *Leprosy* to his *Death*, for *Attempting* it. Which we do not suppose the *People* here did. Only brought their *Sacrifices* to the *Priests*, to be *Sacrificed* by them, according to the *Law*. Yet in a *General* *Acceptation*, they are here said to *Sacrifice*.

I have been the *Longer* upon this, because of the *Arguments* drawn from *Nicery* of *Expression*; without regard to the *Fact*, which is the *surest Interpretation*, as *Actions* are of *Words*.

Therefore I have shew'd you the *Fact* of *Saul's Election*, That it was not by the *People*.

Country-m. It is *Clear* to *Demonstration*. And *Fact* cannot *Fail* Us. But *Trifling* and *Disputing* about *Words* or *Phrases*, is of little *Weight* or *Certainty*. And is taken up *Generally* by those who have a *Mind* to *Banter*, and *Confound* things, and not to let Us see the *Truth*.